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ABSTRACT

This document presents the activities that received Future Farmers of America's (FFA's) Model of Innovation awards in 2001. The booklet begins with an overview of the FFA National Chapter Award program and a list of the 2001 Models of Innovation Winners. The next three sections profile award-winning activities in the following areas of the three divisions for which awards are given: (1) student development (leadership, healthy lifestyle, supervised agricultural experience, scholarship, and agricultural career skills); (2) chapter development (chapter recruitment, finance, public relations, leadership, and support groups); and (3) community development (economics, environment, human resources, citizenship, and agricultural awareness). The award-winning middle grade chapter innovator is profiled separately. The objectives of an FFA program of activities (POA) is presented along with guidelines for developing an effective POA and preparing a national chapter award application. The following are among the membership recruitment tips listed in the booklet's final section: (1) ensure that potential students are aware of the opportunities available in FFA; (2) make FFA an integral part of the agricultural program; (3) encourage timid students to become involved; (3) carefully match experienced students with other students in a mentoring relationship for conducting FFA activities; and (4) let potential students see firsthand the close relationships that develop between agriculture students and their teachers. (MN)

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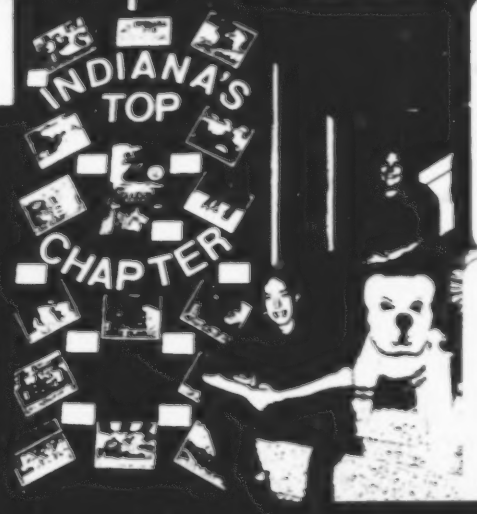
Chapter Innovators Guide 2001

MODELS OF INNOVATION AWARD WINNERS



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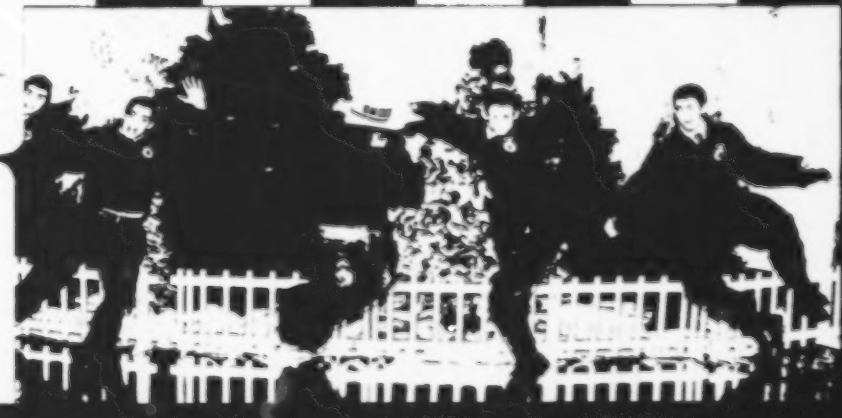


Cargill

LAND O'LAKES FOUNDATION

Spring, 2002

Dear FFA members:

Cargill and Land O'Lakes congratulate the award winning National FFA Chapters that are featured in this book. The winners of the 2001 National Chapters Awards are truly models of innovation. We encourage you to read about these winners and their outstanding achievements. We also challenge every FFA chapter to learn from them and strive for similar success.

The award winning FFA chapters are not only dedicated to innovation but they are true leaders in their communities. We all know that rural America needs experienced and committed leaders. Whether you go on to farm full time, work in agribusiness, or teach and inspire young people like your Ag instructors do, rural America needs you. We need your commitment to keeping our world fed, our industry strong, and our communities healthy and viable.

That's one reason Land O'Lakes and Cargill support the National Chapter Awards. This comprehensive program encourages and recognizes student participation and achievement in three key areas: individual student development, strengthening your own FFA chapter, and building a better community in which to work and live. We hope your chapter will be featured in this book next year.

Congratulations again and we look forward to hearing from you on your successes during this year and in the future.

Sincerely,

Alan

Alan Willits
Vice President
Cargill AgHorizons

Bonnie

Bonnie Bassett
Executive Director
Land O'Lakes Foundation

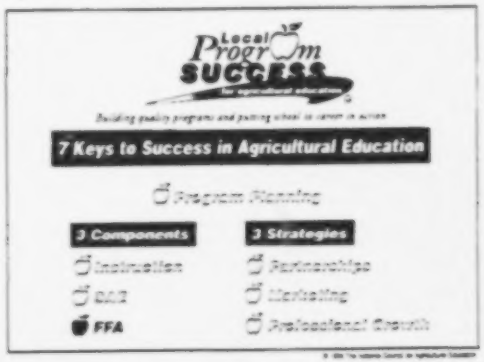
Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon

The Mission

Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

The Mission

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth** and **career success** through agricultural education.



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Models of Innovation

Introduction

FFA chapters annually develop Programs of Activities (POAs) to guide them through the year's events. The POA serves as the chapter's "road map" to success. The FFA National Chapter Award program recognizes chapters for their efforts in planning and meeting the objectives they set in their POAs. The POA and the award program have three divisions—Student Development, Chapter Development and Community Development. Each year at the national FFA convention, the ten highest-scoring chapters in each division receive the Model of Innovation Award.

The 2001 Model of Innovation award winners' activities are presented in this book. Through them, you'll see a sample of the many ways FFA chapters identify needs, create plans to meet their goals, implement their plans and evaluate results. Many of the projects may sound similar to activities your chapter has undertaken. What makes them innovative is the way they were developed and implemented. The award judges were impressed with these chapters' abilities to identify goals and objectives, create a workable plan of action, and not only get results, but also analyze those results, identify items learned and determine ways to improve future activities.

Use the ideas in this book to spark innovative ideas for your FFA chapter. When your new officer team is elected, they should review this book as a group and use it as a resource when developing their POA. The book also contains insights from students and advisors, a summary of the award program, tips for National Chapter Award success and ideas for recruiting more members into your FFA chapter.

Set your sights on strengthening your students, chapter and community in innovative ways. Organize chapter activities with a written Program of Activities, apply for recognition and reap the rewards of innovation in your school, community and beyond!

"Don't take your high school years for granted. There is so much you can do in FFA. You'll have a great time and learn skills you'll use for the rest of your life. Serving as an officer has helped me develop my self-confidence and my speaking skills."

Katie Ellis, 2001-2002 East Clinton FFA Chapter Reporter

East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

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The FFA National Chapter Award Program

Successful FFA chapters share one common trait–they understand that success is the result of planning and implementing those plans. The FFA National Chapter Award program encourages chapters to develop and use a written Program of Activities (POA) and recognizes chapters' achievements through the following awards:

State Superior Chapter

Any chapter in good standing that completes at least one activity related to each of the National Chapter Award program's 15 quality standards (see box) may apply for this award. State Superior Chapters receive a recognition certificate.

State Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards

Chapters that qualify for the State Superior Chapter award may supply additional information about three activities in each division. State judges score these activities to determine State Gold, Silver and Bronze awards. Winning chapters receive a multi-year plaque, and as awards are earned in subsequent years, they receive plaque inserts that specify the level achieved.

National Three-Star, Two-Star and One-Star Gold Awards

Chapters that receive the State Gold award may compete for national awards. The number of applications a state may submit is restricted to no more than 10 percent of its total number of chapters. National award judges score the applications. Each chapter receives a multi-year plaque with an engraved plate that indicates its achievement of the Three-Star, Two-Star or One-Star award. The "star" designation signifies overall achievement in the National Chapter Award program.

Model of Innovation Awards

The Model of Innovation awards are presented to the 10 top-scoring Three-Star chapters in each division. These chapters each receive a special recognition plaque at the national FFA convention. Special recognition is also given at the national FFA convention to the top-rated middle school FFA chapter.

For complete details on the FFA National Chapter Award program, consult *Chapter Planning and Recognition: A Student Handbook*. It is available free from the National FFA Organization and is also available on the *Local Program Resource Guide* CD-ROM. For a hard copy, call 1-888-332-2668 and request item #NCAH.

Chapter Quality Standards

The FFA National Chapter Award program recognizes chapters' development and use of a written POA that addresses the quality standards in the three divisions. For more information on each standard, refer to the corresponding sections of this book.

Division I–Student Development
Personal and group activities that improve life skills and address quality standards in:
- Leadership
- Healthy lifestyles
- Supervised agricultural experience (SAE)
- Scholarship
- Agricultural career skills

Division II–Chapter Development
Activities that encourage students to work together and address quality standards in:
- Chapter recruitment
- Financial
- Public relations
- Leadership
- Support groups

Division III–Community Development
Cooperative activities with other groups that make the community a better place to live and work, and address quality standards in:
- Economic
- Environmental
- Human resources
- Citizenship
- Agricultural awareness

2001 Models of Innovation Winners

Student Development Division

National Winner
Clinton Central FFA Chapter, Indiana

Model of Innovation Finalists
Benton Community FFA Chapter, Iowa
Conococheague/James Buchanan FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania
Garretson FFA Chapter, South Dakota
Granton FFA Chapter, Wisconsin
Middleburg FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania
Otsego FFA Chapter, Ohio
Perham FFA Chapter, Minnesota
Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin
Yelm FFA Chapter, Washington

Chapter Development Division

National Winner
East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

Model of Innovation Finalists
Adams Central FFA Chapter, Indiana
Bloomer FFA Chapter, Wisconsin
Franklin FFA Chapter, Nebraska
Heritage FFA Chapter, Indiana
Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraksa
Middleburg FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania
McCook Central FFA Chapter, South Dakota
Monticello FFA Chapter, Iowa
Otsego FFA Chapter, Ohio

Community Development Division

National Winner
Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon

Model of Innovation Finalists
Bowling Green FFA Chapter, Ohio
Cissna Park FFA Chapter, Illinois
Dyersburg FFA Chapter, Tennessee
Greenville FFA Chapter, Ohio
Indian Valley FFA Chapter, Ohio
Portland FFA Chapter, Tennessee
Mt. Carroll FFA Chapter, Illinois
South Rowan FFA Chapter, North Carolina
Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

Outstanding Middle Grade Chapter

Worth County Middle School FFA Chapter, Georgia

The 2001 awards are based on activities completed during a 12-month period between January 2000 and June 2001 (deadlines vary by state).

"As a chapter officer, it was my responsibility to reach out to new members and those who hadn't been involved and encourage them to become active."

Kristen Baker, 2001-2002 Clinton Central FFA Chapter President

Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon

Bowling Green FFA Chapter, Ohio

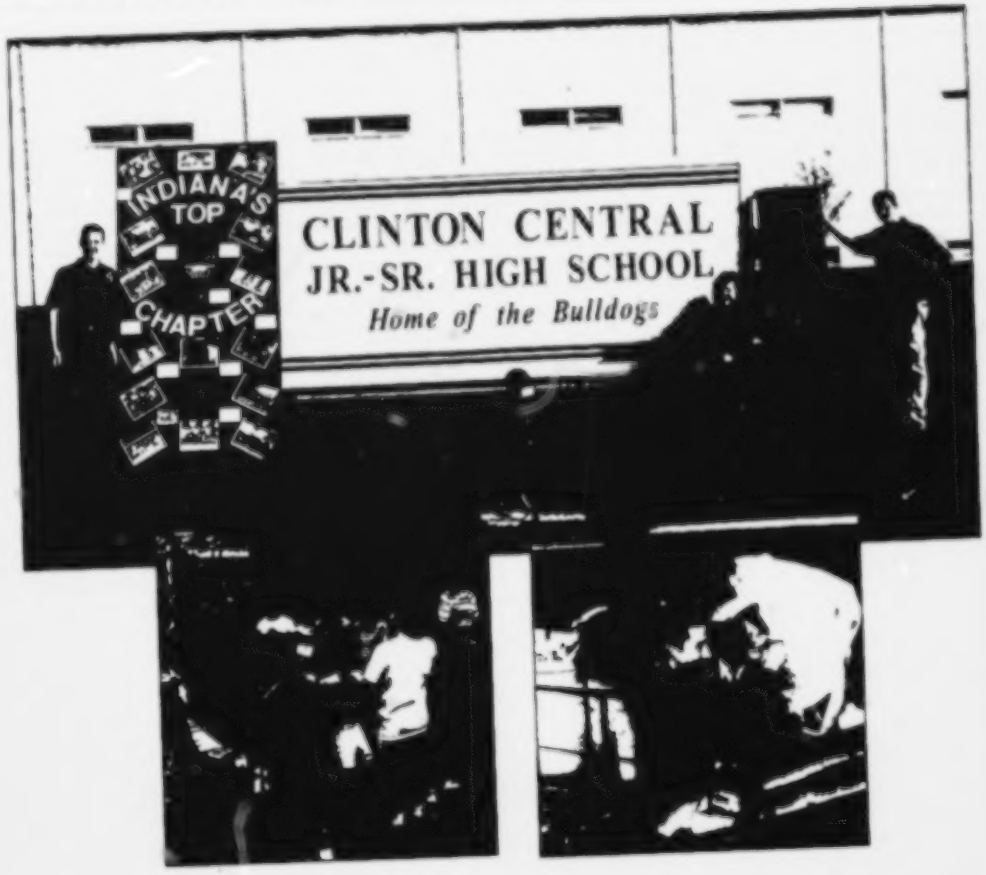
Dyersburg FFA Chapter, Tennessee

2001 National Chapter Award Winner

Clinton Central FFA Chapter, Michigantown, Indiana

"As a team, we really wanted to reach beyond the core group of active members. I'd go up to someone in the hallway and ask him or her to attend an event or become involved in a committee. It's a simple way to help them feel special and welcomed in the chapter."

Hanna Phillips, 2001-2002 Clinton Central FFA Chapter Vice President



Student Development Quality Standards

Leadership activities help the individual develop technical, human relations and decision-making skills to enhance personal success.

Healthy lifestyle activities promote the well being and self-esteem of students, either mentally or physically.

Supervised agricultural experience activities promote student involvement and growth through agriculture-related experience and/or entrepreneurship.

Scholarship activities develop a positive attitude toward lifelong learning experiences.

Agricultural career skill activities develop agricultural occupation and career skills through a progressive learning environment.

2001 National Chapter Award Winner

Clinton Central FFA Chapter, Michigantown, Indiana

When the Clinton Central FFA Chapter officer team met to establish its goals, increasing member participation and involvement became a major theme. "We really use the Program of Activities (POA) as the starting point of member involvement," says Phil Carter, chapter advisor. "A copy of the POA is made available and every student is assigned to a committee. The committees meet twice a month during the school's activity period."

To develop student **leadership**, the chapter encouraged its members to participate in the Indiana FFA Leadership Academy. The seven members who participated secured funding for their portion of the program, and attended five different seminars across the state, each lasting three to four days. Then, the members–along with an advisor, a community member and another teacher–spent nine days traveling through France and Germany. They visited farms and agricultural schools as well as agribusinesses and tourist attractions, such as the Eiffel Tower. The participants developed their personal leadership skills, gained a better understanding of and appreciation for global agriculture, and enjoyed the experience of a lifetime.

To develop **healthy lifestyles** among its members, the chapter sponsored a trip to the Timber Ridge Ski Area near Kalamazoo, Michigan. The chapter provided transportation for the 21 members who spent the day skiing and snowboarding.

The chapter hosted two livestock shows during the summer to help members develop skills in their **supervised agricultural experience** programs before the county fairs. Between the two shows, 80 exhibitors participated and 27 members assisted. More than 200 people attended each show and the chapter earned a total of $2,184.

During the chapter banquet and on Senior Awards Day, eight senior members were presented with awards recognizing outstanding **scholarship**, leadership and SAE skills. Scholarship pins were presented to underclassman to recognize outstanding achievement.

To broaden chapter members' **agricultural career skills**, nine Greenhand members visited the Atascadero FFA Chapter in California during spring break. They stayed with members of the Atascadero chapter, visited major attractions and participated in FFA events. Members from the Atascadero chapter visited Clinton Central in October.

All of these activities were student-driven and were developed, managed and implemented by chapter members. The key to getting the ball rolling was a pro-active chapter officer team that worked diligently to develop a challenging POA and then continuously encouraged chapter members to become involved.

FFA members conducted several holiday service activities with elementary students, including making cookies.

Officers encourage member participation in the chapter's two livestock shows.

Involving new members is one of the main areas on which the Clinton Central FFA officers focus their efforts.

Healthy Lifestyles

Healthy lifestyle activities promote the well being and self-esteem of students, either mentally or physically.

FFA Basketball Tournament

In an effort to get to know members from other area chapters, Otsego hosted a county basketball tournament. Four teams participated in the activity.

—Otsego FFA Chapter, Ohio

Blood Drive

The FFA chapter hosted two blood drives. They publicized the events, lined up donors, brought in refreshments and scheduled locations for the blood drives.

—McCook Central FFA Chapter, South Dakota

National Farm Safety Week

The Greenville Fire Department was invited to our National Farm Safety Week activities where they instructed FFA members on the proper use of fire extinguishers.

Greenville FFA Chapter, Ohio

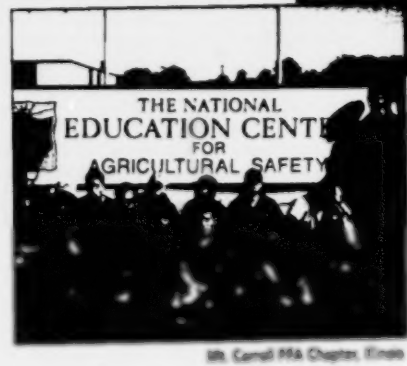
Greenville FFA Chapter, Ohio

Garretson FFA Chapter, South Dakota

Agriculture Safety Seminar

Junior and senior FFA members attended a seminar at the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety. They learned about PTO entanglement, grain bin safety, combine safety, livestock handling and fire extinguisher use.

Mt. Carroll FFA Chapter, Illinois



Mt. Carroll FFA Chapter, Illinois

Teens Against Tobacco Use

Members conducted classroom presentations for pre-school through eighth-grade students, teaching the importance of abstaining from tobacco products.

Garretson FFA Chapter, South Dakota

More Healthy Lifestyle Ideas

Tractor Operator's Course

FFA members helped prepare and present a 24-hour Tractor Operator's Course. The course included classroom, laboratory and hands-on training for students ranging from 12-16 years old.

—Bloomer FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

FFA Sports Tournaments

To increase member participation in FFA and encourage teamwork and exercise, members participated in the FFA sub-district softball, volleyball and trap shoot tournaments.

—Monticello FFA Chapter, Iowa

Agricultural Safety Bowl

Chapter members promoted safety by hosting an Agricultural Safety Bowl based on the Jeopardy game format. The first competition was held at the Penn State University Agricultural Progress Days. There were three areas of questions: animal, utility and general safety.

—Middleburg FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

Training

Safety training was provided to students through participation in the Farm Agricultural Safety Bowl, PALS program, Tractor-Farm Equipment Safety program and the Hunter Education program.

—Middleburg FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

Healthy Lifestyles

Making the Shop Safer

A new activity emphasizing shop safety was implemented. Members reorganized the shop to make it safer, painted safety lines, installed fire extinguishers and updated safety glasses.

—Conococheague/James Buchanan FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

My Home, My Health, My Self

Members attended a local safety training program and then conducted workshops at school and community events. Activities are presented to reinforce safety in all aspects of their lives.

Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

FFA High-Point Trip

Members earned points for participating in FFA activities. Plaques were given to the high-point member in each membership year. The top 10 members received a four-day camping and hiking trip.

Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraska

SPIN (Serving People in Need) Project

FFA members solicited for appointments and donations for two weeks before the collection date with great response. A total of 60 units of blood were donated by FFA and community members.

Garretson FFA Chapter, South Dakota

Drug and Alcohol Education

Chapter members organized an assembly for junior high and high school students to inform them of the dangers of using drugs and alcohol, and to show students the relationship between self-esteem and substance abuse. Participants also had the chance to use fatal vision goggles to simulate drunkeness.

Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon

Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Garretson FFA Chapter, South Dakota

Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon

More Healthy Lifestyle Ideas

End-of-the-School-Year Event

The End-of-the-School-Year Event was held the last day of final exams. Members swam, fished, played volleyball and grilled hamburgers. The incoming freshman were invited to attend so they could get to know the officers and members, making their transition to high school easier.

—Dyersburg FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Learning Proper Etiquette

To teach FFA members proper table etiquette before the annual parent/member banquet, the chapter held an "FFA Roadkill Lunch." Members were instructed on proper manners for seating, table settings, napkin use, conversation, introductions and other items in a humorous and fun way.

—Bowling Green FFA Chapter, Ohio

FFA Olympics

As a way of acquainting its members and encouraging exercise, the chapter hosted an FFA Olympics. The events consisted of various recreational activities such as tractor tugging, hay stacking, water relay, cow-chip tossing and numerous other agriculture-related sporting events.

—South Rowan FFA Chapter, North Carolina

Diversity Means No Limits

For Martin Luther King Day, members held an assemby and self-esteem workshops. The assembly and workshops provided students with leadership training, self-esteem and self-worth strategies, and focused on diversity in the local culture.

—Yelm FFA Chapter, Washington

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Leadership

Leadership activities help individuals develop technical, human relations and decision-making skills to enhance personal success.

Leadership Workshop

Chapters from the surrounding area brought their officer teams and other interested members to participate in leadership workshops. The event launched with a general group meeting to motivate members and detail the activities. Various awards were presented by a state officer and the state FFA advisor.

—Bowling Green FFA Chapter, Ohio

Safety Awareness Days

This community's Annual Safety Awareness Day was hosted by the FFA chapter. FFA members planned, financed and presented demonstrations on more than 16 different agriculturally related safety topics to nearly 450 area elementary and preschool students.

—Greenville FFA Chapter, Ohio

Monthly Meeting Involvement

Chapter officers wanted members to be more involved in their monthly meetings. To achieve this, the officers rehearsed the meetings in advance. At each meeting, they provided a free dinner meal, awarded door prizes, and incorporated activities that required group participation. In addition, students who attended FFA meetings earned extra credit.

—South Rowan FFA Chapter, North Carolina

PALS

Elementary teachers identified reading and the need for positive role models as the two areas on which the PALS program should concentrate. Through the year, the program raised the elementary reading recovery students' reading scores an average of ten levels.

Franklin FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Made for Excellence

The Made for Excellence conference has helped chapter members learn about personal growth and how to achieve their goals.

—Dyersburg FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Officer Training Camp

The Universal Ropes Course is used at the officer training camp to develop student leadership. The students are given the concept of "challenge by choice" and encouraged to complete the obstacles.

Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Franklin FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

More Leadership Ideas

Learning by Doing

A week-long educational trip to Washington, D.C., was organized by chapter members. Before the trip, participants took a three-week summer school history class to learn more about the area's history.

—Granton FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Ropes Course

To establish officer-member rapport and develop leadership skills, members and officers participated in a ropes course. Participants had to use problem-solving skills and cooperatively share ideas to accomplish many of the course objectives.

—Indian Valley FFA Chapter, Ohio

Leadership Training

All members developed skills by participating in leadership training events, including the national FFA convention seminars, Farmland Youth Leadership Conference and many other events.

—Middleburg FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

Learning About Nutrition

Working with the family and consumer science class, all agriculture students researched and presented reports pertaining to the basic food groups and proper nutrition.

—Worth County Middle School FFA Chapter, Georgia

Supervised Agricultural Experience

Supervised agricultural experience activities promote student involvement and growth through agriculture-related experience and/or entrepreneurship.

Hall of Fame

Members were inducted into the FFA Hall of Fame based on the awards they have received. This allows more recognition for students who excel.

—Benton Community FFA Chapter, Iowa

Agricultural Research

The chapter partnered with The Ohio State University and Wood County Soil and Water Conservation District to develop members' skills and experience in timely research of agricultural production techniques. Members planted different plots of no-till and conventional tillage soybeans and made comparisons. They planted trees for windbreaks to prevent soil erosion, and experimented with different species, fertility and growth rates.

—Bowling Green FFA Chapter, Ohio

SAE Technology

To encourage FFA members to develop SAEs, the chapter has developed a computerized SAE program library and has received funding for a lap-top computer with which to conduct record-keeping activities during home visits.

—Granton FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Showcasing SAE at the Banquet

The junior officer team produced a Powerpoint presentation of all the in-school members' SAEs and presented it at the chapter banquet.

—Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Building SAEs in the Greenhouse

Members were provided with greenhouse space for SAE projects. Interviews were conducted for a greenhouse supervisor. The selected supervisor hired seven student assistants. They prepared for plant production and sales. The students also wintered many plants for the public in exchange for cuttings that were made, grown into plants and sold. Members were allowed to keep 80% of the profit, and received significant income from this activity.

Portland FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Wild Game Birds

Twenty-one students had the opportunity to raise and release at least 30 game birds of their choice. This program included members and non-members and resulted in some non-members becoming active FFA members. The students learned about natural resource management, facility management, habitat evaluation, habitat improvement and release-site determination.

Perham FFA Chapter, Minnesota

Portland FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Perham FFA Chapter, Minnesota

More SAE Ideas

Agricultural Job Shadows

Students experienced a variety of career fields in which they were interested by shadowing professionals in the workplace. Proper business conduct skills were acquired by working with professionals.

—Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon

Project Spotlight

Project Spotlight recognized deserving students in their SAE areas. During chapter meetings, students received recognition and were asked to make brief presentations about their SAEs. This activity also helped students develop leadership skills such as public speaking.

—Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Shining Stars

Members were encouraged to keep their SAE records up to date and complete proficiency applications. This resulted in two district stars, 15 state proficiency winners and eight state degree recipients.

—Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

Retail Sale

To promote student involvement and growth, chapter members started and produced tomato and pepper seedlings for retail sale to the general public.

—Indian Valley FFA Chapter, Ohio

Scholarship

Scholarship activities develop a positive attitude toward lifelong learning experiences.

College Representatives

The chapter invited representatives from colleges with agriculture programs to visit each agriculture class. The representatives provided students with information to help them decide on a college major.

—Conococheague/James Buchanan FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

National FFA Career Show

Many members attended the national FFA convention and the career show. As part of their trip, they each collected information from four colleges and five prospective employer exhibits. They also gave class presentations on their experiences.

Portland FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Recording Accomplishments

The chapter encouraged its members to keep records at the beginning of their high school career and develop a résumé that would help them complete scholarship applications.

—Heritage FFA Chapter, Indiana

Portland FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Positive Attitude

To develop a positive attitude toward scholarship, the East Clinton FFA Chapter presented scholarship pins and academic awards to members who attained classroom excellence.

East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

More Scholarship Ideas

Grades Count

Chapter members who earned a 3.5 GPA or higher received a scholarship pin at the annual banquet. This effort highlighted the importance of academic excellence to students enrolled in agriculture.

—Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Peer Tutors

FFA members served as peer tutors for other students in the school, while also improving their own academic performance. Members with the highest academic averages were recognized at the school academic banquet.

—Worth County Middle School FFA Chapter, Georgia

Cash Scholarships

The FFA chapter presented four $300 scholarships to its members who were planning to attend college. FFA was the only organization in the high school that presented cash scholarships to seniors.

—Cissna Park FFA Chapter, Illinois

Achieving Academic Excellence

To increase the number of scholarships FFA members receive, a scholarship workshop was held. Members were trained to use the Internet to find additional scholarship opportunities.

—Heritage FFA Chapter, Indiana

Agricultural Career Skills

Agricultural career skills activities develop agricultural occupation and career skills through a progressive learning environment.

Hydroponics

After developing a School-to-Work grant, the chapter received funding for a hydroponics system. The plant science class developed an in-school business by producing and marketing hydroponically grown tomatoes for sale to the school lunch program.

Franklin FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Women in Agriculture

All female FFA members attended the 2000 Women in Agriculture Conference to learn more about their roles in agriculture and the community. During the conference, participants practiced first aid techniques using a dummy.

Otsego FFA Chapter, Ohio

Field trips

Through field trips, chapter members learned about local agribusinesses and the careers they offer.

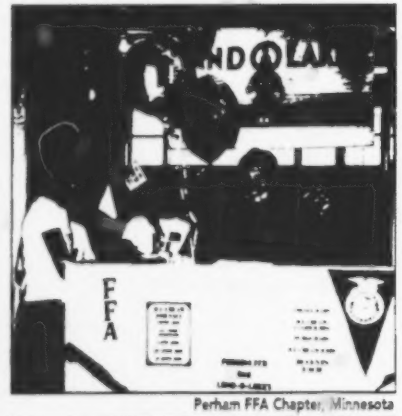
Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Learning to Do, Earning to Live

FFA members worked cooperatively with Land-O-Lakes to sell ice cream at the East Otter Trail Fair. The students learned how to work effectively with the public to give a sales presentation, make a sale, receive payment and make correct change. The money raised was used to fund chapter trips.

Perham FFA Chapter, Minnesota

Franklin FFA Chapter, Nebraska



Perham FFA Chapter, Minnesota

Otsego FFA Chapter, Ohio

Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

More Agricultural Career Skills Ideas

Commodities Training

Every other year, Agriculture III classes and above visited the Chicago Board of Trade and the Chicago Stock Exchange to learn more about the different types of careers available in marketing agricultural products.

—Mt. Carroll FFA Chapter, Illinois

Career Opportunities

Chapter officers invited speakers from local agribusinesses to discuss their careers and what students need to do to prepare for similar careers. This increased student awareness of the agricultural jobs available and provided educational guidance.

—Dyersburg FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Hops Farm Tour

Agriculture students toured a local hops farm to learn the process of harvesting hops and competition among businesses.

—Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon

Job Shadow Day

Agriculture careers were promoted through a job shadow day. Students had the opportunity to experience agriculture careers and learn what is involved first-hand.

—Worth County Middle School FFA Chapter, Georgia

Career Development Events

Each agriculture class was encouraged to compete in a different leadership career development event, compiling members of that class for the team. Members met with the advisor to review rules and prepare for their competition.

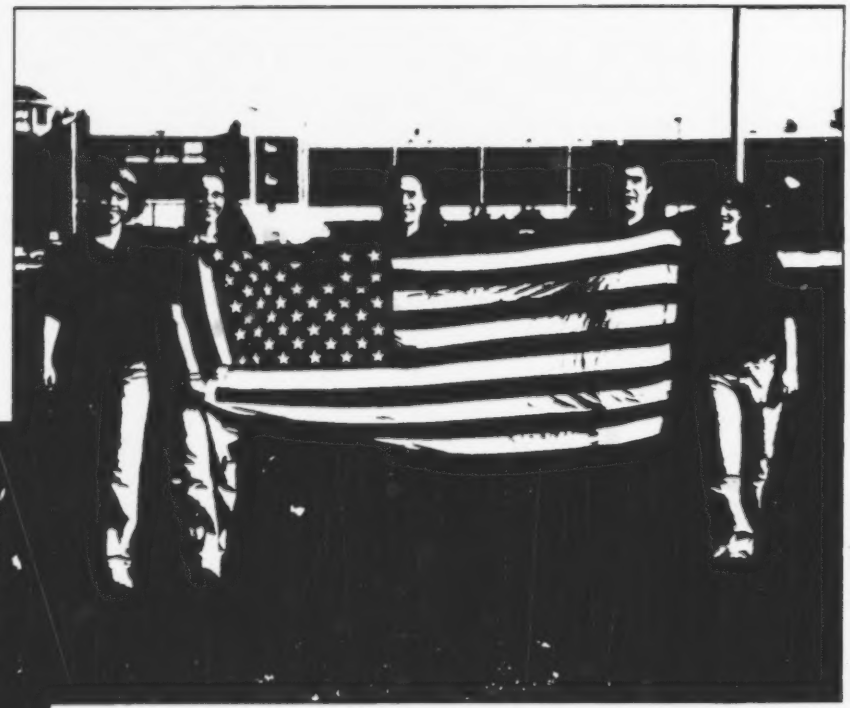
—Benton Community FFA Chapter, Iowa

2001 National Chapter Award Winner

East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

"We put a lot of effort into our eighth-grade leadership night. It's a great way to get everyone involved and off to a good start. Everyone is assigned to a POA committee and we work hard to get everyone involved. Once a student becomes active, they feel like they're a part of the chapter, and that's a great feeling."

Sarah Ellis, 2001-2002 East Clinton FFA Chapter Vice President



Working together, East Clinton FFA members landscaped a city park.

Chapter Development Quality Standards

Chapter recruitment activities increase agricultural education enrollment and/or FFA membership and encourage greater participation.

Financial activities encourage thrift and good financial management among members through earnings, savings and investments.

Public relations activities promote a positive image and inform students, parents, school officials and the community about chapter and member accomplishments.

Leadership activities develop teamwork and cooperative skills among chapter officers, committees and members.

Support group activities develop and maintain positive relations among FFA members, parents, community leaders and industry.

2001 National Chapter Award Winner

East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

The East Clinton FFA Chapter uses a "Star Board" to track and encourage participation. In the classroom, a board with a list of everyone's name is displayed along with a column for each activity or event. Everyone who participates receives a star next to his or her name in the appropriate column. At a glance, students can see who's participating and encourage those who aren't to become more involved.

"Success breeds success," says Ken Fliehman, East Clinton FFA Chapter advisor. "Once a student experiences even a small taste of success, they will want to do more. They, in turn, encourage others to become involved and the level of participation snowballs."

The chapter hosts an eighth-grade leadership night to **recruit** new members. FFA members participate with groups of eighth-grade students in a scavenger hunt and barnyard Olympics events. Then, a short program introduces the eighth-grade students to FFA and information packets are distributed. After the program, door prizes are distributed and everyone makes their own ice-cream sundaes.

To **finance** its wide array of activities, the chapter sold citrus fruit, apples and popcorn. As an incentive, members got to keep a portion of the money they raised. At the final count, individual members pocketed more than $2,500, while the chapter grossed $50,000.

The annual parent-member banquet serves as a great **public relations** tool. All 82 chapter members received some type of recognition in front of the 400 guests in attendance. The audience included school officials, local business leaders, faculty and parents.

Chapter members developed their **leadership** skills by working together to build and landscape a city park. They grew plants in the school greenhouse and prepared areas for planting as part of this ongoing project.

In addition to the park, the students worked with chapter **support groups** to develop a community educational wetlands and nature area in the school district. Students worked on the wooded area, constructed a wetlands, seeded wild flowers, constructed bird watch areas, and built a learning area with benches.

Chapter leaders stress the importance of providing activities for all students and caring for each individual. "Our FFA chapter is like a big family," says Fliehman. "We look out for one another and help our members develop life skills. FFA can do so much by helping students develop their self-confidence and teaching them how to succeed in the real world. Even when students don't reach their goals, they learn valuable lessons just by participating in the process."

East Clinton FFA members worked with others in the community to develop a community wetlands and nature area.

Working with the local sheriff's department, members fingerprinted more than 220 children.

FFA officers plan a wide array of activities to provide something of interest for everyone.

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Chapter Recruitment

Chapter recruitment activities increase agricultural education enrollment and/or FFA membership and encourage greater participation.

New Member Night

Together with the Future Homemakers of America, the Cissna Park FFA Chapter hosted a "new member" night. New members were invited to a pork barbeque dinner and planned activities. This was a great way to get the new members involved and informed about the organizations' activities.

—Cissna Park FFA Chapter, Illinois

Recruitment

Chapter recruitment efforts included team-building activities, a tour of the agriculture department, information about the agriculture curriculum and FFA programs and awards.

—Conococheague/James Buchanan FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

Mini-PEAK Conference

The officer team planned a conference for junior high students. They hosted three sessions: Teamwork challenge, where students were given a certain amount of supplies and had to develop a flying airplane; FFA-Who Wants to Be a Millionaire, provided FFA information to students; and Personal Success Influential People, made students realize who influences them. This event helped tremendously with recruitment.

—Franklin FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Pasture Golf

To acquaint new members with chapter officers, the officers held a pasture golf tournament. Members teed off while standing on a bale of hay, chipped into the windmill tank, avoided sand traps, tried to miss moving cars along the street, and navigated a variety of other hazards on the nine-hole course.

Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Agricultural Career Day

FFA members provided hands-on activities in the natural resources lab for visiting 8th graders. The FFA members presented educational information and explained how it fits in with agriculture and exciting careers.

Bowling Green FFA Chapter, Ohio

Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Bowling Green FFA Chapter, Ohio

More Chapter Recruitment Ideas

Big Brothers and Big Sisters

Older members served as mentors for younger members to help new and current members stay organized. The pairs created notebooks containing the student handbook, chapter constitution, POA, phone tree, merit point list, calendar of events, SAE record books and class notes.

—Monticello FFA Chapter, Iowa

Project Initiation

The chapter implemented a leadership program called Project Initiation focused on personal development, interpersonal communication skills and team-building. Activities included various races, an obstacle course and a pig catch. More than 200 members and new recruits attended the event. The program concluded with a hayride and bonfire cookout.

—Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Membership Drive

Chapter officers gave presentations on the opportunities in FFA to all students during their homeroom period. The officers distributed a membership package, which included a free trip to the Sunbelt Expo.

—Worth County Middle School FFA Chapter, Georgia

Student Planners

Members developed a planner with informational pages about FFA, and provided it to all students on the high school campus as a way to gain additional exposure for FFA.

—Yelm FFA Chapter, Washington

Financial

Financial activities encourage thrift and good financial management among members through earnings, savings and investments.

Popcorn

The chapter planted, harvested and processed popcorn to learn how to develop a marketing plan and sell a product. As a part of the project, members calculated input costs and expected income.

—Heritage FFA Chapter, Indiana

Horticulture and Floriculture Endeavors Pay Off

Members gained experience in production, marketing, advertising and sales skills through organizing plant sales and constructing and marketing floral items. The chapter has also developed a unique parnership with the Nisqually Tribe, which purchases decorative floral baskets from the chapter for its casino entrance. The tribe also purchases a maintenance contract for members to care for the plants at the casino during the spring and summer.

—Yelm FFA Chapter, Washington

Fruit Sales Incentive

As an incentive to increase sales volume, after a member sold five boxes of fruit, he or she received a commission of $1 per box.

—Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Tractor Pull

The Adams Central FFA Chapter holds an annual tractor pull. They have seven classes of antique tractors and three classes of farm stock tractors. Members handle all aspects of the pull, from organization, promotion, and event responsibilities such as weigh -in, concessions and awards.

Adams Central FFA Chapter, Indiana

Adams Central FFA Chapter, Indiana

Citrus Sales for Charity

After selling more than 1,650 boxes of citrus fruit, the chapter was able to donate 40 boxes of fruit to the American Legion's food drive.

Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

More Financial Ideas

Small Business Skills

Members developed the advertisements, designed order forms, packaged, distributed, collected money and balanced the books for all FFA fundraisers. This helped students of all grade levels develop skills for operating a business.

—Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Shoots n' Sprouts

Chapter members organized and operated a business selling various plants for Mother's Day. They elected managers for finance, production and marketing. The even sold shares of stock in the company to generate revenue, and the members received an 85% return on their investment.

—Indian Valley FFA Chapter, Ohio

Making Money

Chapter members sold beef jerkey, candy, hams and turkeys to raise funds for the chapter.

—Worth County Middle School FFA Chapter, Georgia

Greenhouse Cooperative

Students learned to manage a profitable business. Through the chapter's greenhouse cooperative, they grew and sold bedding plants and poinsettias to the community. In addition, they established a wholesale business serving local floral shops.

—Monticello FFA Chapter, Iowa

Public Relations

Public relations activities promote a positive image and inform students, parents, school officials and the community about chapter and member accomplishments.

Agricultural Advisory Board

The Agricultural Advisory Board has been a major part of the agriculture department rebuilding process. The committee consisted of 12 people including parents, farmers, agribusinessmen and past members.

—Adams Central FFA Chapter, Indiana

Media Training

In addition to the chapter reporter, one additional officer and three other chapter members received media training and all became regular contributors to local newspapers.

—Benton FFA Chapter, Iowa

Cutting Hair

Members convinced an advisor who was well-known statewide for his long, blonde hair, to donate his locks to a worthy cause in a fundraising activity. They sold raffle tickets state-wide, and drew three winners to cut his hair on stage at the state convention. A state representative also assisted. The shorn hair was donated to an organization that makes wigs for children suffering from cancer who have lost their hair. The event received national media coverage.

—Cissna Park FFA Chapter, Illinois

Lights, Camera, Action!

The chapter regularly sends news releases to local media. As a result, the media covers many FFA events throughout the year.

Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

FFA Supporters' Picnic

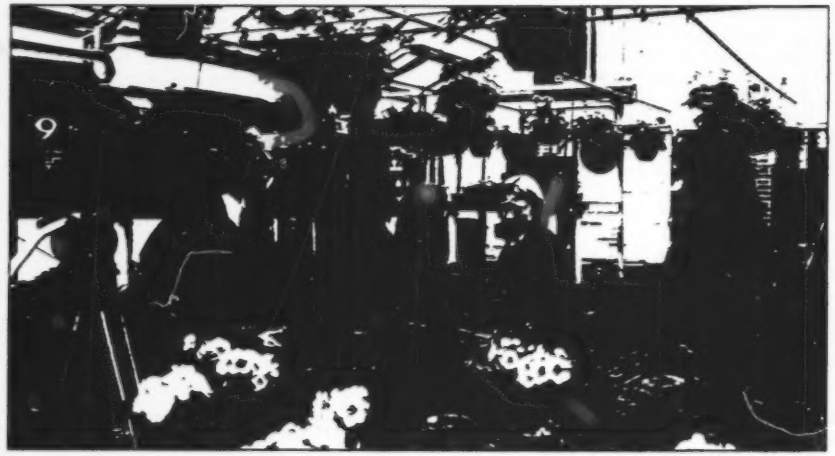
Members prepared a picnic to show the community the chapter's appreciation for its support of the FFA program. They delivered a brief summary of the various activities they had completed, and presented certificates to the supporters.

—Clinton Central FFA Chapter, Indiana

FFA Activities Booklet

The chapter developed a step-by-step FFA Activities Booklet to inform the public of chapter accomplishments. The booklet contains a detailed description of chapter accomplishments in career development events and other activities, and was distributed to guests at the FFA banquet.

—Conococheague/James Buchanan FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania



Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

More Public Relations Ideas

Project S.O.S. (Students of Service)

Members used chapter funds, grants and community support to build a concession stand for the local baseball park.

—McCook Central FFA Chapter, South Dakota

Flower Planters

Members built cedar flower boxes to be maintained by businesses, and repaired many of the wooden trash can receptacles on Main Street.

—McCook Central FFA Chapter, South Dakota

Technology Program

FFA members helped the State Farm Show vendors demonstrate the uses of computers within the field of agriculture. Members assisted farm show participants with operating computers and using the Internet.

—Middleburg FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

Harvest Fest

Chapter members honored and initiated Greenhand and Chapter FFA Degree recipients and their parents during a Harvest Fest in September. Participants also learned about quality produce from the Hay, Grain and Horticulture Show, which was held in conjunction with the Harvest Fest.

—Monticello FFA Chapter, Iowa

Public Relations

FFA Flag Flown

To keep the public informed during special promotion weeks, members flew the FFA flag in front of the school. The events were also announced to the school.

—Greenville FFA Chapter, Ohio

National FFA Week

During National FFA Week, the local daily newspaper published an eight-page FFA insert highlighting the chapter's accomplishments. The chapter provided information and stories for the newspaper staff.

—Dyersburg FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Faculty Breakfast

During National FFA Week, the chapter prepares a breakfast for all staff and employees of the high school, area administrators and board members.

East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

Agriculture for a Changing World

Members informed the public, young and old, of the importance of agriculture in our economy and their lives. Chapter members promoted Wisconsin agriculture and the National FFA Organization at area businesses.

Bloomer FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Kiddie Pedal Pull

The chapter promoted and facilitated three kiddie tractor pulls during the summer to increase community exposure for the FFA.

Otsego FFA Chapter, Ohio

FFA Week

Members presented a 30-minute live presentation on a local radio station for National FFA Week. The presentation highlighted the FFA and the activities being accomplished. The chapter also presented a cake to the school's teachers to thank them for their support.

South Rowan FFA Chapter, North Carolina

East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

Otsego FFA Chapter, Ohio

Bloomer FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

South Rowan FFA Chapter, North Carolina

More Public Relations Ideas

Chapter Web Page

Members developed a chapter webpage to keep FFA members, parents, alumni and community supporters updated on the chapter's activities.

—Monticello FFA Chapter, Iowa

60th Anniversary Banquet

For the 60th Anniversary Banquet, the chapter created a historical booklet and video depicting chapter and member accomplishments over the past 60 years.

—Granton FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Project Inform

A major goal for the publicity committee was to have at least 30 newspaper articles published about the chapter during the year. By working with the local media and providing timely information, a total of 47 articles were published in various newspapers.

—Garretson FFA Chapter, South Dakota

Dress-Up Days

The chapter organized themed dress-up days during National FFA Week. Students (members and non-members) dressed up on the different days of the week. The themes included blue and gold, farmer, overalls and hat day.

—South Rowan FFA Chapter, North Carolina

Parent-Member Banquet

The parent-member banquet involved all 82 chapter members and 400 guests, including school officials, businesses, faculty and parents. To ensure widespread member recognition, all received some type of an award for their participation.

—East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

Leadership

Leadership activities develop teamwork and cooperative skills among chapter officers, committees and members.

FFA Day at the Capitol

Elected officials from the Environment and Agriculture, Agriculture and Rural Development, and K-12 Education Finance committees were invited to share ideas with students in an informal forum. Students met with legislators to discuss current issues as well as present their concerns on pending legislation. More than 120 FFA members from across the state participated. The Perham FFA Chapter organized and facilitated this statewide event.

—Perham FFA Chapter, Minnesota

Chapter Convention

The Chapter Convention allowed members to develop leadership skills and practice for career development events in a format similar to the district and state competitions. Chapter officers selected younger members and worked together on different committees to make sure all responsibilities were met. State officers were invited to host breakout sessions and present team-building skill sessions similar to the state leadership camp.

Heritage FFA Chapter, Indiana

Barnyard Zoo

Students invited day-care center attendees, kindergarten through sixth grade classes, high school agriculture classes and community members to attend the barnyard zoo. Participants were able to pet the animals, and members gave a safety demonstration tour that covered the dangers and safety precautions needed when working with or around tractors and electricity.

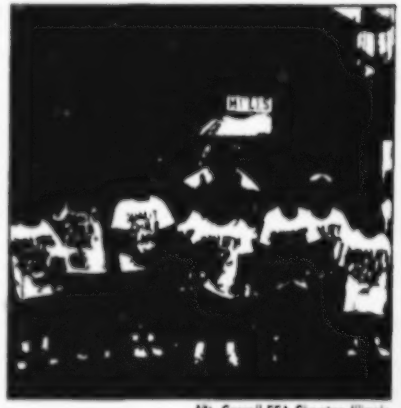
Mt. Carroll FFA Chapter, Illinois

Heritage FFA Chapter, Indiana

Chapter Officer Retreat

Imperial FFA officers work on their POA during an officer retreat.

Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraska



Mt. Carroll FFA Chapter, Illinois

Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraska

More Leadership Ideas

Leadership Training School

The chapter varsity officers and greenhands attended a leadership training school. There were many workshops and it gave greenhands an opportunity to meet and interact with other FFA members.

—Mt. Carroll FFA Chapter, Illinois

Parent/Member Banquet

Officers and members practiced and demonstrated their leadership skills as they planned, coordinated and conducted the annual chapter banquet. Planning started well ahead of time as committees were formed to organize each area of the event.

—South Rowan FFA Chapter, North Carolina

Leadership Points

Through a chapter conference, the officers and members developed a leadership point system, which was beneficial in electing chapter officers.

—Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

Leadership Development Program

The chapter officers set goals they feel will help the chapter and its members receive the greatest benefit through FFA leadership opportunities, then work to implement the activities required to meet the goals. This program helps members develop their full potential.

—Benton Community FFA Chapter, Iowa

Support Group

Support group activities develop and maintain positive relations among the FFA, parents, community leaders and industry.

Alumni

The chapter hosted meetings to determine if there was enough interest to start an alumni affiliate. The effort resulted in success as an affiliate was formed.

—Benton Community FFA Chapter, Iowa

Bulls on Main Street

Through this project, chapter members helped area producers display their purebred bulls and heifers. The event provided a low-cost forum through which local breeders could market their purebred cattle.

—Franklin FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Fire Prevention Training

Students worked with the local fire department and emergency medical technicians to develop and deliver safety programs for elementary students. The program included tours of the firehouse and ambulance, a poster contest and presentations on fire safety. The local newspaper covered the program and ran a photo on the front page.

—Cissna Park FFA Chapter, Illinois

Educational Wetland and Nature Area

FFA members developed a community educational wetland and nature area in the school district. Students worked on the wooded area and constructed a wetland, seeded wild flowers, constructed bird watch areas and a learning area with benches.

—East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

Signatures of Success

The chapter wanted to recognize FFA alumni, so the members prepared a fair booth exhibit that highlighted alumni members. It displayed various alumni pictures, quotes about how the FFA and agriculture classes had made a positive impact on their lives, and signatures. Past editions of FFA magazines were also displayed. Alumni members enjoyed the opportunity to reconnect with FFA.

Portland FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Portland FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Jack-n-the-Beanstalk

The chapter presented the Jack-n-the-Beanstalk story to young children to interact and teach them more about growing plants and how to care for them. After the presentation, members assisted the children in planting seeds to take home and grow, and provided information about agriculture and FFA to the parents.

Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

More Support Group Ideas

Business of the Month Program

Each month, a business was selected as the "FFA Business of the Month" based on support provided to the chapter. Businesses received certificates and notices were printed in the local newspaper.

—Garretson FFA Chapter, South Dakota

National Farm Safety Week Campaign

The chapter hosted a week-long, school-wide National Farm Safety Week Campaign. The campaign featured bulletin boards, public address announcements, videos and posters for all students in grades K-12.

—Granton FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Barbeque

The FFA worked cooperatively with the Greenville FFA Alumni to conduct the annual Chicken/Pork Chop Barbeque. More than 1,500 meals were sold. The profits were used to support chapter members through scholarships, travel expenses and equipment.

—Greenville FFA Chapter, Ohio

Family Fun Night

All new members and their parents were encouraged to attend a family fun night. During this event, officers made four, 15-minute presentations that included hands-on activities.This event informed guests of FFA opportunities as well as provided a leadership experience for chapter officers. It also encouraged new members to become more involved in FFA.

—Indian Valley FFA Chapter, Ohio

2001 National Chapter Award Winner

Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon

"Provide a wide variety of activities to interest students. Different people enjoy different things. By diversifying your activities, you'll meet more people's needs. Plus, make a conscious effort to make things fun."

Krista McDowell, 2001-2002 Perrydale FFA Chapter President

For a donation of no less than $5, community members could send a live pig to a loved one (or not so loved one) at their place of work. This person could also "pass the pig" along to someone else, for the same small fee. A "Pass the Pig" Headquarters was established so people who heard advertisements on the radio or television could call in with orders for pigs to be sent to desired locations. Officers and members worked together to plan and organize this fundraising activity during National FFA Week. The chapter gained exposure through television and radio, and learned proper techniques in selling their product and business management.

Community Development Quality Standards

Economic activities improve the economic welfare of the community.

Environmental activities preserve natural resources and develop more environmentally responsible individuals.

Human resources activities improve the welfare and well being of members and citizens of the community.

Citizenship activities promote and encourage members to become active, involved citizens of their school, community and country.

Agricultural awareness activities help the public become better informed about the food system and related agricultural issues.

2001 National Chapter Award Winner

Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon

Building on the past is one key to success in Perrydale, Oregon. "We don't try to start from scratch every year," says Kirk Hutchinson, advisor. "When the members sit down in the fall and develop their POA, I encourage them to include some traditional events and mix in a few new things. Traditional events have a huge impact on the students and the community. First, they have a model to follow; they don't have to build everything from the ground up. Plus, you gain continuity and people in the community look forward to participating."

The POA also needs to be flexible. Hutchinson encourages chapters to take advantages of opportunities that present themselves. "The POA is just a plan and you should feel free to diverge from it when an opportunity comes along. The POA is always a work in progress."

Perrydale FFA members made a significant contribution to their community's **economic** well being by conducting a food and clothing drive and providing needed items to low-income families during the holiday season. They collected more than 10,000 articles of clothing and more than 11,000 pounds of food. The students learned the true meaning of giving and received media coverage for their efforts.

To help protect the **environment**, chapter members worked with the local conservation district to plant 600 trees in a conservation buffer zone. They also gave a tree to every student in the school during National FFA Week and encouraged the students to plant the new trees at their homes.

As a way of connecting with an older generation, Perrydale FFA members worked with a local retirement community and established a series of activities with the residents. The members visited the retirement community on several occasions. They sang songs and gave the residents cards and small gifts they had made. They also prepared a holiday luncheon and served 65 senior citizens an attractive, nutritionally sound meal. These **human resource** activities helped bridge the generation gap and resulted in friendships between members and seniors.

FFA members hosted a holiday caroling party and invited all high school students to join in the fun. The event was a great way to involve other students in an FFA activity. The activity also provided a way for students to express their **citizenship** and create awareness of FFA activities.

To increase **agricultural awareness**, chapter members made presentations at several area conferences. They covered agricultural information and spoke about agricultural education, highlighting FFA and the leadership development the organization provides.

FFA members connect with their elders during an activity at a local retirement community.

Perrydale FFA members prepare corn for their annual community corn feed.

FFA members display small, decorative items they made from wood to give seniors at a local retirement community during the holidays.

Economic

Economic activities improve the economic welfare of the community.

Alternative Agriculture Crops

Chapter members are engaged in researching and developing possible alternative agriculture crops for local producers. One example was the Tilapia project, in which students learned to produce this flavorful fish. The project also provided an SAE project for the student who was selected to be the aquaculture supervisor. Two 1,500-gallon tank systems were constructed. 50 Tilapia fingerlings were obtained from a neighboring school and used to test each tank. The students conducted many water quality tests daily. The supervisor set feeding schedules and kept records for all tests performed, hours worked and production costs.

—Portland FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Caring Without Limits

Members assisted with the completion of a Habitat for Humanity house project. The chapter also adopts a needy family for the Christmas season, and collects donations to buy gifts, clothing and food items.

Yelm FFA Chapter, Washington

Emergency Address Signs

The chapter partnered with the fire department, police department and ambulance service to assemble and install reflective numeric address signs at area residences. An ad was run in the local paper and orders were taken for the signs.

Cissna Park FFA Chapter, Illinois

Donkey Basketball

The FFA chapter worked with the senior class to host a donkey basketball game during National FFA Week. The participants had to play basketball on the back of a donkey. It was a great success with a standing-room-only crowd. The proceeds helped raise money for the senior class trip.

Middleburg FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

Yelm FFA Chapter, Washington

Middleburg FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

Cissna Park FFA Chapter, Illinois

More Economic Ideas

Grounds Maintenance

Chapter members planted more than 3,000 trees around the community as well as 40 large trees in the school arboretum. The chapter was also responsible for maintaining the trees and for 3.3 acres of conservation reserve program land that it obtained.

—Mt. Carroll FFA Chapter, Illinois

Adopt a Cause

Each year the chapter has elected to "adopt a cause" that was of interest to the school. The chapter raised money and donated it to the chosen group or individual.

—Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

Working Together

Along with the La Porte-Dysart FFA Chapter and the Vinton FFA Chapter, members co-sponsored the Benton County Invitational Livestock Judging Contest to bring many teams to the area, which helped promote the community.

—Benton Community FFA Chapter, Iowa

Helping Local Charities

The chapter contributed $1,000 to two different local charities. The money was raised with a kiss-the-pig contest as well as from donations collected in the high school classrooms.

—Adams Central FFA Chapter, Indiana

Environmental

Environmental activities preserve natural resources and develop more environmentally responsible individuals.

Arbor Day

Chapter members planted a small blue spruce tree in front of the elementary school to celebrate Arbor Day. Several members presented a short program on the importance of trees to the elementary students.

—Adams Central FFA Chapter, Indiana

Wildlife Awareness

Chapter members assisted in constucting fish cribs on an area lake by collecting brush at a logging site and hauling it to the construction area. After the conservation corps prepared the logs, we assisted in assembling them.

Bloomer FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Harlan County Lake Improvement

Members surveyed campers, boaters and fishermen at a local lake to see what improvements were wanted. The members reviewed the list, selected several major items to repair, and with help from the rangers, fixed the problems.

Franklin FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Project Flower Power

FFA members rebuilt, designed and landscaped the area outside the agriculture department, including a water pond for koi, as well as other areas around the school and community.

Conococheague/James Buchanan FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

Pheasants Forever

The chapter partnered with Pheasants Forever to facilitate cooperative burns for habitat improvement. Students administered prescribed burns under supervision from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Mt. Carroll FFA Chapter, Illinois

Bloomer FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Franklin FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Conococheague/James Buchanan FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

Mt. Carroll FFA Chapter, Illinois

More Environmental Ideas

Landscape Project

Trees, shrubs and flowers were planted by members as part of the school's landscaping project and as home improvement projects. Local organizations presented programs to chapter members encouraging environmental responsibility in the members' SAEs.

—Greenville FFA Chapter, Ohio

Special Education Classes

Chapter members helped the special education classes learn about agriculture by teaching them how to plant seeds and care for plants.

—Dyersburg FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Chapter Farm

As a soil-erosion-control cover crop, members planted all end rows on the chapter's educational plot with alfalfa.

—McCook Central FFA Chapter, South Dakota

Tree Planting

Members helped farmers conduct reforestation programs. They also planted trees on conservation reserve program (CRP) acreage as wildlife habitat. As a result of their efforts, the chapter earned $3,000 to use for leadership conferences and training.

—Perham FFA Chapter, Minnesota

Lake Laboratory

The chapter worked with community service organizations to build a lake laboratory. This provided a learning laboratory for students and improved the beauty of the school landscape. Chapter members cleared trees and dug out the berm core. The lake took shape quickly when the earthen dam started rising. The majority of the materials were donated by community businesses.

—Portland FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Citizenship

Citizenship activities promote and encourage members to become active, involved citizens of their school, community and country.

Community Shade Tree Project

Chapter members planted shade trees in the boulevards and parks to replace lost elm trees and enhance new development.

—Bloomer FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Relay for Life

The FFA chapter participated in the first *Relay for Life* walk for cancer in the community. Members were sponsored by a construction company to walk 24 hours. In addition, they gave out bottled water and food products.

Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

Government Involvment

Chapter members sent letters to their state representatives, as well as their senators and congressmen to inform elected officials about FFA chapter accomplishments. Elected officials also met with members on Agriculture Legislative Day to talk about activities in the chapter and in the legislature. A house bill was written to honor the chapter and its members for their community efforts.

Cissna Park FFA Chapter, Illinois

Town Meetings

To improve communications between community members, local organizations, Heritage High School and the FFA chapter, members held three town meetings. Prior to the meetings, the chapter built picnic tables to donate to the area parks and raised money for new firefighter equipment. These items were presented at the end of the town meetings.

Heritage FFA Chapter, Indiana

Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

Heritage FFA Chapter, Indiana

Cissna Park FFA Chapter, Illinois

More Citizenship Ideas

Queen of Hearts

The chapter recruited girls from the high school to participate in the Queen of Hearts pageant. The candidates were required to choose a charitable cause and develop a community platform for it. An entry fee was charged to sponsor each candidate, and the girl crowned was awarded the proceeds for her charitable cause.

—Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

Special Olympics

Chapter members volunteered to assist with the Special Olympics program. They helped plan and organize events and provided assistance to participants who were taught how to focus on targets, develop self-control, and to communicate verbally. Members developed a better understanding of those who are differently abled and compassion for others.

—Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

Senior Citizens

The chapter offered a community bingo night to senior citizens. Members worked with older citizens and provided drinks, snacks and assistance.

—Switzerland County FFA Chapter, Indiana

Share-A-Christmas

The chapter set a goal of collecting at least 5,000 new toys to serve 500 families. They had great public response and expectations were exceeded as they delivered 6,615 new toys to 1,416 children from 631 families. Each child received four new toys. The students acquired a greater appreciation for what they have and gained a passion for helping others.

—Indian Valley FFA Chapter, Ohio

Citizenship

Walk America

Members participated in the March of Dimes Walk America event. Members also designed t-shirts to raise money to fight birth defects.

—Greenville FFA Chapter, Ohio

Kidz Collecting Kanz

FFA members organized and participated in the Kidz Collecting Kanz food drive. The local elementary students and high school clubs were encouraged to bring canned items to school for the food drive.

Heritage FFA Chapter, Indiana

English for Students

Chapter members tutor students who speak English as their second language. This helps the self-esteem and confidence of the ESL students, many of whom are shy and reserved.

South Rowan FFA Chapter, North Carolina

Project Santa

Each year the FFA and the FCCLA chapters put up a Sharing Tree in the high school for less fortunate children and elderly without family in our community. Students, staff and community members take the names from the tree and purchase appropriate gifts. Members from both organizations delivered the gifts the day before Christmas.

McCook Central FFA Chapter, South Dakota

Helping Beautify the Community

FFA members enrolled in the Horticulture class designed and landscaped the local bank and the new Super 8 motel as a class project. They also presented and implemented a maintainance plan for the landscaping.

Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Heritage FFA Chapter, Indiana

South Rowan FFA Chapter, North Carolina

McCook Central FFA Chapter, South Dakota

Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraska

More Citizenship Ideas

FFA Food Drive

The FFA chapter sponsored a food drive in December. Members worked with a local nursing home to deliver food and blankets to needy families.

—East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

Turkey Processing Project

The local Mennonite Church canned turkey meat for hunger relief. FFA members assisted in processing more than 32,000 pounds of turkey, which was sent to 22 different countries on five continents.

—Adams Central FFA Chapter, Indiana

Clean Up

Twice a year FFA members cleaned up litter around the school and community to help keep the area clean and free from pollution. They focused on the stream area near the school to help prevent water pollution.

—Conococheague/James Buchanan FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

Christmas in Garretson Project

Members dressed as shepherds and supervised a live nativity scene complete with sheep, goats and camels during the holiday season.

—Garretson FFA Chapter, South Dakota

Human Resources

Human resources activities improve the welfare and well being of members and citizens of the community.

Play it Safe

The Monticello FFA Chapter hosted a safety day for elementary students. Hands-on activities kept the youngsters' attention and helped FFA members develop presentation skills.

Monticello FFA Chapter, Iowa

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Giving From the Heart

We promote respect for the elderly and less fortunate through many chapter activities. During the holidays we give fruit and poinsettas to community adults.

Garretson FFA Chapter, South Dakota

FFA to the Rescue

The Cissna Park Fire Department purchased several thousand dollars' worth of auto extrication equipment. FFA members participated in a training activity by being victims in cars so the rescue personnel could practice using the equipment and removing people from damaged vehicles.

Cissna Park FFA Chapter, Illinois

Bike Safety Rodeo

Members of the safety committee conducted 11 activities that targeted youth safety in the community. A bike rodeo was held jointly with the police and fire departments and the Chamber of Commerce to promote bike safety for youth in the community.

Yelm FFA Chapter, Washington

Monticello FFA Chapter, Iowa

Cissna Park FFA Chapter, Illinois

Garretson FFA Chapter, South Dakota

Yelm FFA Chapter, Washington

More Human Resources Ideas

Farm Safety Training for EMS

Chapter members assisted emergency medical specialists (EMS) in conducting training sessions to increase EMS awareness of farm safety. They educated the EMS in grain bin entrapment, tractor roll over, chemical spraying and injuries, tractor driving and safety, power take-off units, air-bag roll over of tractors and tractor trailers, and using the "jaws of life" on farm machinery. More than 110 EMS personnel participated in the traning session.

—Otsego FFA Chapter, Ohio

Community Gardens

The chapter provided 12 dozen bedding plants raised in the horticulture lab for the community gardens program. This program invited local land owners to donate the use of vacant land to city and county officials. The officials divide the donated land into garden-sized plots and offer the plots to people who live in the city and don't have the opportunity to raise a vegetable garden.

—Perham FFA Chapter, Minnesota

The Greening of Bloomer

FFA members grew 206 poinsettias and delivered them to local nursing homes for residents and staff. They also planted trees in the city and implemented four different landscape designs around town.

—Bloomer FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

FFA Helping Hand Project

Each member constructed wooden toys to give to children during the holiday season. Members had to pass a safety test on woodworking tools and demonstrate the tools prior to working on their toys. The students also delivered 100 boxes of fresh citrus and apples from their fruit sale to area food pantries and churches for distribution to needy families.

—Bowling Green FFA Chapter, Ohio

Agricultural Awareness

Agricultural awareness activities help the public become better informed about the food system and related agricultural issues.

Agricultural Literacy

Chapter members conducted a week-long Food for America program for elementary students. The program included a petting zoo, field trips to the local grocery store and meat locker, and food and fiber presentations to elementary classrooms.

Granton FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Seed Book Project

FFA members created a storybook that told the life story of a seed to plant. Members then shared their stories with pre-school and first-grade students and assisted the youth in planting their own seeds.

Yelm FFA Chapter, Washington

A Healthy Life

Our Food for America programs teach urban populations about both production and non-traditional areas of agriculture. Students and the general public see the many opportunities that are available in the agriculture industry.

Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

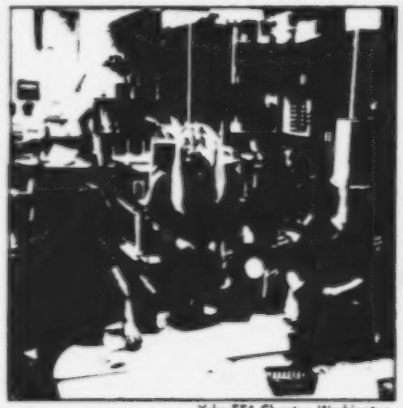
Children's Barnyard

The chapter sponsored a children's barnyard for the community. Members brought in more than 90 animals representing 26 different animal species. The barnyard helped the community realize the importance of agriculture.

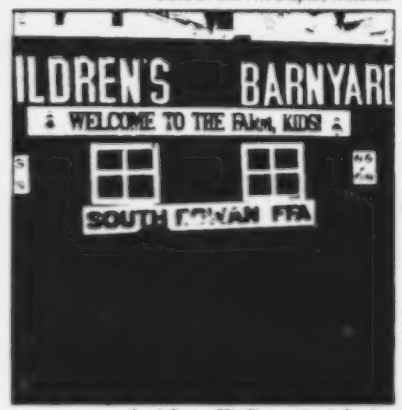
South Rowan FFA Chapter, North Carolina

Granton FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin



Yelm FFA Chapter, Washington



South Rowan FFA Chapter, North Carolina

More Agricultural Awareness Ideas

Farm Safety Day Camp

Chapter members hosted a day-long safety camp for area youth. They focused on grain bin entrapment, electricity, chemical safety, small engines, tractor safety and animal safety. Event participants were all given t-shirts, which were donated by the Ohio Farm Bureau.

—Otsego FFA Chapter, Ohio

Loss of Farmland

The chapter's agricultural issues career development event team created and performed a skit concerning the loss of farmland for the Kiwanis Club and other community organizations.

—Portland FFA Chapter, Tennessee

Local News Media

The chapter placed weekly articles in the local newspaper about FFA competitions and events, and sent public service announcements to local radio stations. The members also developed and submitted articles for use in the school newsletter.

—Mt. Carroll FFA Chapter, Illinois

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Worth County Middle School Activities

John Rayfield, Worth County Middle School FFA advisor says, "Middle school is a very trying time for students, but it is also a very pivotal time. They are eager learners and they're hungry to be involved. Once you get them started, they thrive on activity. Once they experience a taste of success, they're hooked."

When he finds something in which his students are interested, Rayfield lets them run with it. "They want to be challenged and they want to learn more. You have to be flexible and let the students follow their interests."

One activity the students thoroughly enjoy is working with elementary students on their school garden plots. The eighth-grade students work with kindergarten through second-grade students teaching them how to prepare the soil and plant gardens. They become the teachers and take great pride in helping the youngsters.

Student Development

- Members attended a variety of leadership conferences, including state and regional officer training, state convention and summer camp. In addition, 150 members attended the Sunbelt Expo.
- In conjunction with the family and consumer science class, all members researched and presented reports pertaining to the basic food groups and proper nutrition.
- Many members showed livestock at various competitions. They learned proper management practices to ensure the animals performed to the best of their abilities.
- Members served as peer tutors for other students in the school, while also improving their own academic performance. FFA members with the highest academic averages were recognized at the school academic banquet.
- Students had the opportunity to learn about agriculture careers through a job shadow day. They experienced different career areas and what each involves first-hand.

Chapter Development

- To promote FFA and recruit members, each FFA officer made presentations to homeroom classes. An orientation meeting was held with a motivational speaker and refreshments.
- Chapter members participated in five fundraisers, including selling beef jerky, candy, hams, turkeys and citrus fruit. The students found operating the concession stand at an area cattle show to be the most enjoyable.
- All FFA activities and accomplishments were promptly published in the local newspaper to keep the community informed and recognize outstanding members.
- All incoming and outgoing officers participated in an orientation session to familiarize the new officers with their duties.
- Members reviewed the year's activities and were recognized for their accomplishments at a chapter banquet.

Community Development

- Relationships were developed with local businesses and farmers though a continuous exchange of ideas and information.
- Chapter members promoted a clean school and community environment by taking responsibility for maintaining the school landscape, including weeding flower beds, trimming shrubs and trees, and raking and mulching.
- Assisting special needs students by teaching them about plant production in the greenhouse made these students feel important and a part of the FFA.
- Members collected food and cleaning products for a nearby community that suffered tornado damage.
- A bulletin board in the school cafeteria was periodically updated by members. They displayed information on food production and food safety.

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Program of Activities

Successful FFA chapters understand that success is the result of planning and then implementing their plans. They develop a written Program of Activities (POA) to establish and work toward their goals for the year. A well-planned and well-executed POA helps students develop planning and leadership skills they need for career and personal success.

A well-planned POA will:

- ensure chapter activities meet members' needs;
- lead to a workable budget;
- provide students with experience in planning;
- serve as a reference point throughout the year;
- provide direction from year to year.

POA Development Steps

The strongest POAs emerge from a committee structure and process that involves every member in setting chapter goals, then planning and carrying out activities. Many chapters use the following steps. Start by using the *National Chapter Award* video to introduce members to the process. For more details and helpful forms, refer to *Chapter Planning and Recognition: A Student Handbook*. Both items are available from the National FFA Organization. Call 1-888-332-2668 and request item #PCHP or item #NCAH, respectively.

- The chapter organizes standing, executive and special committees to address the areas of student, chapter and community development. Each member serves on at least one committee.
- Each committee identifies goals and activities related to its purpose/area.
- Committees present their selected activities, including estimated income and costs, to the entire chapter for approval.
- Approved activities and a combined chapter calendar of events are published in the written POA. It is distributed to all members.
- Committees and subcommittees develop detailed plans for each activity.
- Members implement the plans.
- Committees report results and evaluate the activities. They prepare written final reports for each activity, noting costs, income, accomplishments and recommendations.
- Chapter leaders refer to the POA and its results to prepare an application for the National Chapter Award program.

Applying for recognition through the National Chapter Award program is the "icing on the cake." Recognition from the state and national organizations rewards students for their hard work and brings added prestige to the chapter.

Monticello FFA Chapter, Iowa

Cissna Park FFA Chapter, Illinois

Goal Statement for FFA Chapter Activities

The National FFA Organization encourages chapter activities that provide:

- a balance of experiences inside and outside the classroom, with sensitivity for students who have part-time jobs or work after school;
- opportunities for developing self-confidence, responsibility, citizenship, cooperation and feelings of winning and self-esteem;
- hands-on activities;
- general leadership skills;
- accessibility for all student populations;
- flexibility that will allow students of all abilities to achieve;
- flexibility that will allow chapters from various environments and with various levels of resources to achieve;
- multiple levels of participation and experiences;
- appropriate recognition for all participants;
- relevant educational experiences that expose students to opportunities in food, agriculture and natural resources.

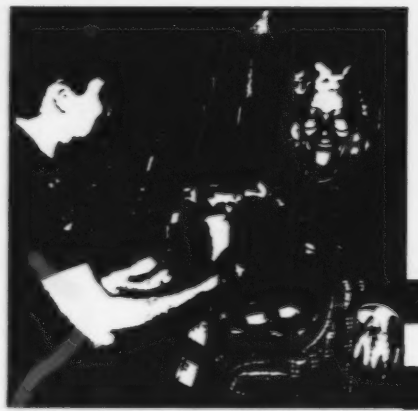
Tips for Success

You may find the following tips helpful when preparing your National Chapter Award application. They have been gleaned from those involved with the selection process, including judges, advisors, members and national FFA staff.

Follow the developmental process outlined in *Chapter Planning and Recognition: A Student Handbook*. Identify specific goals that are measurable and realistic; develop a plan that is educational and meets the goals the chapter has set; and evaluate the results achieved and the benefits members experienced. Be sure to include information on how the activity affected members, the chapter, school and community.

- In the application, every activity should have measurable objectives and the plan of action should be detailed and reference each objective.
- Include specific facts about percentages of membership involved and accomplishments.
- Keep a file of activities and notes on areas for improvement within each activity. Students can use this information when they begin the year's Program of Activities (POA) planning.
- Many new ideas and ideas for improvement spring to mind when completing the application. Make a concerted effort to note these spontaneous ideas and capture them for use during the next POA planning session.
- Use each activity only once on Form I. If used more than once, your chapter will not qualify for National Gold recognition.
- Ask an English teacher to edit and proofread your application. They will learn more about the FFA and you are bound to submit a better application. Always use the spell-check function on your computer and the grammar-check function if you have it.
- Don't attach information or materials that are not requested. Points may be deducted or an application may be disqualified for including supplementary materials not specifically requested in the application.
- Review the application checklist before submitting your application. Follow instructions carefully. Please use the FFA award application folder, as pages may be lost if not secured.
- Photos tell your story and good photography is important. Plan ahead and have all events photographed well. Getting good photos means shooting ample frames. Your photographer should have some experience in composing the images and exposing the shot correctly. Photos that aren't well-exposed are generally either too light, too dark or grainy.
- The National FFA Organization uses photos from the winning entries in printed materials and cannot use scanned or digital images from applications. If your chapter has moved from film to digital photography, be sure to capture some images of each event at a resolution of at least 300 DPI, so that they may be submitted for publication. Lower resolution images cannot be reproduced well in printed materials.

Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon



Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon

Imperial FFA Chapter, Nebraska

Stevens Point FFA Chapter, Wisconsin

National FFA Chapter Program Expectations

The National FFA Chapter Award program guides students to achieve the SCANS foundation skills and competencies by:

- practicing student leadership and citizenship to solve community-based problems
- demonstrating the leadership and human relations skills necessary to become productive members of society;
- developing interpersonal skills by valuing diversity, practicing tolerance and acceptance of others and working cooperatively toward common goals;
- using information-based technologies to complete prescribed forms and documents.

Otsego FFA Chapter, Ohio

Greenville FFA Chapter, Ohio

Franklin FFA Chapter, Nebraska

East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio

McCook Central FFA Chapter, South Dakota

Membership Recruitment Tips

A strong FFA Program of Activities and FFA chapter membership work hand in hand. Strong programs attract more members, and full chapter membership makes it possible to undertake a wider variety of in-depth projects.

The FFA chapter also serves as a tool to recruit students into the agricultural education program. Here are some ideas for building your agricultural education program through FFA involvement.

- Ensure the FFA chapter "belongs" to students, that they plan and conduct its activities and receive related recognition.
- Make sure potential students are aware of the opportunities available in FFA. Students who are seeking waysto be involved in activities should look no further than this vibrant, dynamic organization.
- Make FFA an integral part of the agriculture program. Provide all students with instruction in leadership development. Assuming career development events (CDEs) are an application of lessons learned in class, all students should likewise be expected to participate in CDEs.
- Encourage timid students to become involved. Often, students are reluctant to participate in leadership activities unless personally encouraged to do so. Once involved, however, they quickly develop skills and competencies and often continue their involvement.
- Ask every student to be involved in at least one FFA activity each grading period. Chart their involvement.
- Carefully match experienced students with other students in a mentoring relationship for conducting FFA activities. Invite potential members to travel with members to FFA activities.
- Let potential students see firsthand the close relationship that develops between agriculture students and their teacher(s).
- Plan fun FFA events–field trips, in-school barbecues, parties, recreation, etc.–for all students, and work to see that all students attend.

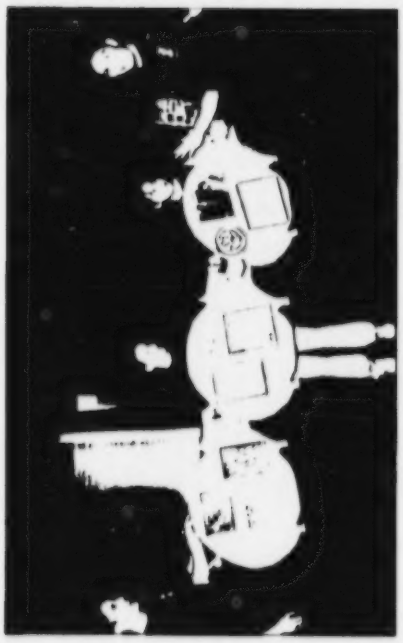
Otsego FFA Chapter, Ohio

Middleburg FFA Chapter, Pennsylvania

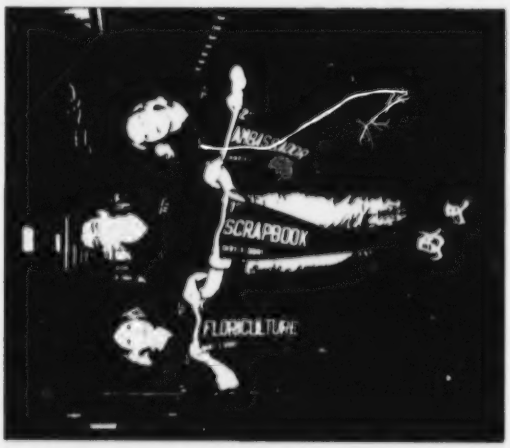
Benton Community FFA Chapter, Iowa

Photography for the Clinton Central FFA Chapter, Indiana; East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio; and Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon; provided by Jim D'Angelo. Chapters provided the remaining photography.

East Clinton FFA Chapter, Ohio



Perrydale FFA Chapter, Oregon



Clinton Central FFA Chapter, Indiana

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